

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 073-2005



**To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission**

Date: March 15, 2005

**From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jorge M. Gonzalez", written over the printed name.

Subject: PUBLIC SAFETY INITIATIVES ON THE BOARDWALK

The purpose of this Letter to the Commission is to update the Mayor and City Commission on the Administration's initiatives to enhance the police presence on the City's Boardwalk from 21st Street to 46th Street.

As way of background, on January 11, 2005, Commissioner Smith and I hosted a meeting with Mr. Peter Rickman and other representatives from "Save Our Boardwalk". The meeting was attended by representatives of various City and County Departments including Police, Sanitation, Parks and Neighborhood Services. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss ways to improve the public safety and maintenance of the Boardwalk.

The City currently provides private security service on the Boardwalk through Armor Security Inc. Armor Security patrols the Boardwalk with two guards assigned to two shifts daily. The first shift is a four hour shift from 5:00 AM to 9:00 AM and the second shift is an eight hour shift starting at 5:00 PM and ending at 1:00 AM. During the month of January, the security contract with Armor was up for renewal. The contract had already gone out for bids and the City was in the process of reviewing eleven security companies interested in bidding on this contract. The Police Department has recommended a primary and secondary company to provide uniformed security guard service.

Following the meeting, all Middle District shift commanders and supervisors were instructed to make the Boardwalk a crime prevention priority and to assign a portion of their resources each day to address crime and public safety issues.

Below are some of the initiatives implemented by the Middle District Shift Commanders.

- Utilize the two hour shift overlap between Patrol Shifts (7:00 AM to 9:00 AM, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM and 11:00 PM to 1:00 AM), to assign a squad of officers to the Boardwalk.
- The assignment of Park and Walk Details on the Boardwalk throughout the three patrol shifts.
- The assignment of a Plain clothes detail utilizing two police officers from January 12

through January 31, 2005 during the Afternoon Shift hours of 3:00 PM to 11:00 PM. In addition, Middle District Shift Commanders are assigning one uniformed police officer on a bicycle during the same hours.

- The assignment of plainclothes Crime Suppression Team to walk the entire Boardwalk at least one evening a week.
- The assignment of the Robbery Task Force to deploy on Friday and Saturday nights with at least two police officers to monitor the Boardwalk each weekend.
- The assignment of 2 police officers to ride ATVs on the beach side of the Boardwalk on a 24hour, 7 days a week basis.

Further, the MBPD conducted Quality of Life Missions on the Boardwalk on January 19, February 10, and February 18. Referrals were made to the appropriate departments regarding to code violations, garbage on the streets, the homeless, non-working telephones and lights.

Coordination between Miami Beach Police Department Officers and security guards assigned to the Boardwalk has improved. The guards are continually encouraged to summon police officers whenever they observe suspicious activity. The security guards now include all contacts with police officers on their daily log sheets.

Evidence of these improvements on the Boardwalk is evidenced by the number of calls for service on the Boardwalk in the last two months of January and February 2005. During this time period there were a total of **115 calls for service and 12 arrests**. Most of these calls were initiated by police officers assigned to the Boardwalk and security guards reporting minor incidents to the police. This is very significant when compared to **38 calls for a five month period** prior to the January 11, 2005 meeting.

Perhaps the most promising initiative is the creation of a Citizen's Crime Watch Committee for the Boardwalk. To further our commitment to this endeavor, the MBPD department has worked with Mr. Rickman in selecting Mr. Paul Segelman as Chair for this committee. The Citizen's Crime Watch Committee had there first meeting on March 2, 2005 with representatives of the MBPD in attendance. In addition, Committee organizers are in the process of actively recruiting representatives of the adjacent hotels and commercial establishments.

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